

## Accommodating Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel: A Recommended Approach, Policy of the US DOT; full document at <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/design.htm>

Excerpts:

### Purpose:

**Accommodating Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel: A Recommended Approach** is a policy statement adopted by the United States Department of Transportation. USDOT hopes that public agencies, professional associations, advocacy groups, and others adopt this approach as a way of committing themselves to integrating bicycling and walking into the transportation mainstream. The Design Guidance incorporates three key principles:

- a. a policy statement that **bicycling and walking facilities will be incorporated into all transportation projects** unless exceptional circumstances exist;
- b. an approach to achieving this policy that has already worked in State and local agencies; and
- c. a series of action items that a public agency, professional association, or advocacy group can take to achieve the overriding goal of improving conditions for bicycling and walking.

The Policy Statement was drafted by the U.S. Department of Transportation in response to Section 1202 (b) of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) with the input and assistance of public agencies, professional associations and advocacy groups.

### Policy Statement

1. Bicycle and pedestrian ways shall be established in new construction and reconstruction projects in all urbanized areas unless one or more of three conditions are met:

- bicyclists and pedestrians are prohibited by law from using the roadway. In this instance, a greater effort may be necessary to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians elsewhere within the right of way or within the same transportation corridor.
- the cost of establishing bikeways or walkways would be excessively disproportionate to the need or probable use. Excessively disproportionate is defined as exceeding twenty percent of the cost of the larger transportation project.
- where sparsity of population or other factors indicate an absence of need. For example, the Portland Pedestrian Guide requires "all construction of new public streets" to include sidewalk improvements on both sides, unless the street is a cul-de-sac with four or fewer dwellings or the street has severe topographic or natural resource constraints.

2. In rural areas, paved shoulders should be included in all new construction and reconstruction projects on roadways used by more than 1,000 vehicles per day, as in States such as Wisconsin. Paved shoulders have safety and operational advantages for all road users in addition to providing a place for bicyclists and pedestrians to operate.

Rumble strips are not recommended where shoulders are used by bicyclists unless there is a minimum clear path of four feet in which a bicycle may safely operate.

3. Sidewalks, shared use paths, street crossings (including over- and undercrossings), pedestrian signals, signs, street furniture, transit stops and facilities, and all connecting pathways shall be designed, constructed, operated and maintained so that all pedestrians, including people with disabilities, can travel safely and independently.

4. The design and development of the transportation infrastructure shall improve conditions for bicycling and walking through the following additional steps:

- planning projects for the long-term. Transportation facilities are long-term investments that remain in place for many years. The design and construction of new facilities that meet the criteria in item 1) above should anticipate likely future demand for bicycling and walking facilities and not preclude the provision of future improvements. For example, a bridge that is likely to remain in place for 50 years, might be built with sufficient width for safe bicycle and pedestrian use in anticipation that facilities will be available at either end of the bridge even if that is not currently the case
- addressing the need for bicyclists and pedestrians to cross corridors as well as travel along them. Even where bicyclists and pedestrians may not commonly use a particular travel corridor that is being improved or constructed, they will likely need to be able to cross that corridor safely and conveniently. Therefore, the design of intersections and interchanges shall accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians in a manner that is safe, accessible and convenient.
- getting exceptions approved at a senior level. Exceptions for the non-inclusion of bikeways and walkways shall be approved by a senior manager and be documented with supporting data that indicates the basis for the decision.
- designing facilities to the best currently available standards and guidelines. The design of facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians should follow design guidelines and standards that are commonly used, such as the AASHTO *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities*, AASHTO's *A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets*, and the ITE Recommended Practice "*Design and Safety of Pedestrian Facilities*".